



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CHAIRMAN RIDLEY-THOMAS EXPRESSES GRATITUDE FOR THE LIFE OF  
SENATOR DANIEL INOUE OF HAWAI'I**

**LOS ANGELES** –Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas expressed his appreciation for the life work of Senator Inouye, a World War II hero and a powerful advocate for civil rights who died Monday at the age of 88. Throughout his life, Senator Inouye was a champion of racial equality, noted Chairman Ridley-Thomas.

“We have lost a great patriot, a brave leader and a role model,” said Chairman Ridley-Thomas. “My deepest sympathy goes to Senator Inouye’s family and the people of Hawai’i. We in Los Angeles also have a special connection to the Senator through his widow and my long-time friend, Irene Hirano.”

“Beginning with his childhood attending segregated schools in Honolulu, and continuing with his heroic World War II service with the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat team, Senator Inouye’s early years mirrored the experience of many African Americans who volunteered to do battle for their nation, even as their own rights as citizens were denied.”

In the Senate, Senator Inouye was a key ally of President Lyndon Johnson in advancing civil rights legislation. As the keynote speaker at the 1968 Democratic National Convention, occurring in the era of the Watts riots and the civil rights movement, Senator Inouye used his platform to speak movingly of the nation’s racial plight.

Irene Hirano Inouye grew up in the Crenshaw District and devoted herself to serving Los Angeles, first through her work in community health care, as well as by leading the Japanese American National Museum. She was always an important ally during Chairman Ridley-Thomas' work for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and they have continued to this day to work together on projects to elevate the quality of life in various communities.

"I know Senator Inouye's legacy as a civil rights leader lives on through Irene," he said. "And we shall all continue to be inspired by his example."

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